



# **Professional Development for Teachers**

**“Motivating the ELL Learner”**

**With**

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**DC Everest Area Schools  
Merrill Area Schools  
in Partnership with the  
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On ARTSblock  
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## Definition of Drama

- ◆ Drama is an informal and improvisational form of theatre. It is not scripted and usually has a beginning, middle, and end.
- ◆ The acting is spontaneous and is for the self-expression of the participants.
- ◆ It is not production oriented. It has no set, few, if any, costumes and props. It is often crude versus a polished production. It is not meant for an audience.
- ◆ The participants are the actors, directors, audience, and critics. The participants along with a facilitator decide what is to be included, how to present the topic (story), and, after viewing it, assess how to improve the presentation.
- ◆ In a drama experience, participants “live in the moment” of the action. They experience what others think and feel and in doing so experience a deep emotional connection with someone other than themselves. The experience can lead students to a sense of catharsis and/or a change in their feelings or attitudes. It can lead students to feel a profound connection to all mankind.

## Definition of Arts Integration

In education, **arts integration** refers to the equal incorporation of an art form and another content area (social studies, language arts, etc.) into lessons so that objectives in both subjects are addressed. To integrate an art form with another area of the curriculum, authentic (natural and meaningful) connections must exist between the two subjects. In an arts-integrated lesson or unit, students should gain knowledge and/or skills in both subjects. There should be learning objectives in both the art form and the other subject area.

(Definition based on a draft publication, “What is Arts Integration?” The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, 2003 and on text from *A Dramatic Approach to Reading Comprehension*.)

## **GOALS FOR THIS WORKSHOP SESSION**

**The workshop addresses the following broad Content Standards:**

- ESOL students are expected to simultaneously learn to speak, read and write their new language,
- ESOL students are required to attain a certain level of language proficiency to be considered fluent speakers (pass the ESOL exit exam),
- Several states across the nation have established Standards (K-12) in theatre which all students including ESOL students are expected to achieve.

**At the end of this workshop participants should know:**

- The basic acting tools of voice, body and imagination,
- Other important acting skills such as cooperation and concentration (working as an ensemble);
- Several acting tool and skill warm ups;
- The storytelling strategy Story Can Theatre ;
- Procedure for dramatizing a scene/story.

**At the end of this workshop participants should be able to:**

- Use the acting tools and skills outlined above to create characters and promote oral language;
- Apply one or more of the drama/theatre techniques listed above in the classroom to develop receptive and expressive language, as well as literacy, reading motivation and reading comprehension.

**At the end of this workshop participant will understand that:**

- Speaking and learning a new language can be an emotional experience;
- Motivation and risk-taking are key elements in learning anything new;
- Learning activities involving drama/theatre strategies engage and motivate students to speak, read, write and comprehend.

# **STUDENT OBJECTIVES**

## **Drama Objectives:**

**At the end of the workshop, students will be able to:**

- **identify and apply the three acting tools and two basic skills in order to portray characters or objects during drama activities;**
- **analyze how and when these tools and skills are used during drama activities in order to inform and improve the portrayal of characters.**

## **Reading Comprehension Objectives:**

**At the end of the workshop, students will be able to:**

- **recall key facts/events in the correct order to accurately portray an action, event or scene;**
- **use inference in order to create original dialogue and actions for characters or objects;**
- **use synthesis in order to transform information, facts or a story into a new form.**

## Curriculum Connections for Story Can Theatre and Story Dramatization

### Reading Comprehension Connections

Definition of Reading Comprehension: Students will use a variety of strategies to understand what they read (construct meaning).

Story Dramatization includes the steps outlined below in bold print. The reading comprehension skills that correlate with these steps are bulleted beneath them.

**All good drama lessons should begin with a warm-up of all the acting tools. During this section of the lesson the students:**

- Make predictions about the text
- Connect the text to prior knowledge or personal experience
- Identify the elements of a story such as, character, setting, etc.

**During the reading/telling of the story the students:**

- Periodically paraphrase important ideas/moments in the story
- Engage in conversation to understand what has been read
- Periodically paraphrase important ideas/moments in the story

**After the story is read/told the students:**

- Sequence the important events
- Retell the story in their own words
- Summarize the text orally

**When dramatizing key events the students:**

- Dramatize the text in proper sequence
- Respond to the text by dramatizing
- Retell the story in their own words
- Periodically paraphrase important ideas/moments in the story
- Retell and use explicit and implicit main ideas of the stories
- Identify and explain what is not directly stated in the text by drawing inferences
- Connect the text to prior knowledge or personal experience
- Draw conclusions based on the text and prior knowledge

## Becoming Actors

### Basic Acting Tools

Imagination/Mind

Voice

Body

### Basic Acting Skills:

Cooperation (ensemble)

Concentration

**A good way to define acting as well as introduce the basic acting tools and skills is to have the students become a character and then analyze what they did and how they did it.**

1. Choose a story you wish to dramatize.
2. Select a character (or characters) in the book that is interesting and faces a problem, conflict, or dilemma.
3. Describe the character and the dilemma they face in brief terms. Do not include a lot of detail. Just enough for them to make some reasonable predictions.
4. Once they understand the character and the dilemma the character is facing, ask the students to stand like that character.
5. Then ask them to create the first three things that character (characters) might say at that moment in time.  
*For example:* In the book, **Frederick** by Leo Lionni, Frederick does not help his animal friends gather food for the winter, yet once inside their winter home he eats the food his friends have gathered.  
*"What are three things you think his animal friends might say to him when they suddenly discover in the long freezing winter they are out of food?"*
6. Have the students say the lines in the voice of the character. Have the students create a gesture that will accompany each line.
7. Then introduce other theatre terms: Places, Action, Freeze, and Curtain.  
*"We are ready now to act and become the mice. Let me see you look like mice. Now when I say "Places!" we will make our bodies look like mice. When I say, "Action!" we will speak our three lines and do our hand motions that we created. When I say "Freeze!" we will stop whatever we are doing. When I say, "Curtain!" we will relax and be ourselves again and talk about what we just did."*



8. After the students complete this process ask them questions that will help them to reflect and analyze the experience. The answers should result in the basic acting tools and several additional acting skills.

*"We just acted so let us figure out what that means. Are we really mice? No, of course not. So what did we use to become mice? What changed about us?"*

Use their answers to introduce the basic acting tools and at least the acting skill of cooperation (see above). The other skills may or may not be a part of the introductory discussion of acting, but could be introduced at a later time.

9. This same activity can be done individually, with students acting out the predictions in their own way, in their own words and in their own individual space.
10. Once the students are proficient in using the basic acting tools and skills, this same activity can be used again and again to encourage students to predict one or more lines of dialogue that a character might say at a particular moment in the action of a story.

## **Acting Tools**

### **Imagination/Mind**

### **Voice**

### **Body**

## **Acting Skills**

### **Cooperation/Ensemble**

### **Concentration**

# Drama Cues

It is important to establish consistent cues that inform students when it is time to move, be still, speak, or be silent. It is also important that students clearly know when it is time to play a character and when their job as an actor is over.

Some teachers use a musical instrument, such as a tambourine, to cue their students. One hit on the tambourine means move, two means stop, etc. The following are some suggested word cues:

**Actors, show me you are ready for drama--**This phrase indicates students should clear their hands and laps of any item in preparation for drama. All eyes should be focused on the teacher.

**When I say go, but not before I say go--**This means students should be watching and listening to the teacher and waiting for further instructions.

**Places--**This word cue indicates to students that they should be standing in their correct places in the acting area and be prepared to begin the drama. Depending on the activity/strategy, it could also cue students to assume the body of their characters.

**Action--**This word cue tells students it is time to begin acting. Upon hearing this, the students should begin to move and/or speak as their character. (Other commonly used cues for beginning the drama could be: *Curtain up*, *Scene*, or *Begin*.)

**Freeze--**This word cue indicates that the students should stop whatever they are doing and stand perfectly still. This cue could be used to:

- Indicate the end of a scene.
- Stop the action and clarify a point the students may be missing in the drama.
- Stop the action to resolve an issue that is not a part of the drama (e.g., a behavioral issue, a knock on the door, an interruption on the intercom, etc.).

**Curtain--**This word cue indicates the end of the scene or drama. Upon hearing this word students are no longer in character, but become themselves once again. (Other commonly used cues for ending the drama could be: *Curtain down* or *Scene*.)

- Stop the action to resolve an issue that is not a part of the drama e.g. a behavioral issue, a knock on the door, an interruption on the intercom, etc.

**Curtain-** This word cue indicates the end of the scene or drama. Upon hearing this word students are no longer in character but themselves once again. (Other commonly used cues for ending the drama could be: *Curtain down* or *Scene*.)

# Chants

## HEART CHANT

The clean blood enters from the left side.  
The dirty blood exits from the right side.  
The heart beat is the sound  
Of the valves snapping shut  
So the two bloods do not mix.

## PLANTS ON THE GROW

### *Down*

Down  
Down

Roots of plants grow  
Down  
Down  
Down

Deeper the roots  
Go  
Go  
Go

Taller the plant grows. . . UP!

## The Continent Chant

Continents, Continents,  
These are the continents  
Seven in All, Seven in All

First there's Africa – Roar Roar  
Next Antarctica – Brrr Brrr  
Then there's Asia – Great Wall  
Then Australia – Hop Hop  
Don't forget Europe-Tea time  
Then North America – English  
And last South America – Espanol

Continents, Continents  
These are the continents  
Seven in All, Seven in All

# Chants

## BODY PARTS WARM-UP

Head/Head  
Shoulder/Shoulder  
Hip/Hip  
Knee/Knee  
Toes/Toes  
Fingers/Fingers  
1...2...3...

## POSITIONAL WORD CHANT

On, On  
Off, Off  
Over, Over  
Under, Under  
Beside, Beside and all around  
Touch hands on the ground  
Clap 1...2...3...Stop!!!

In front, In front  
Behind, Behind  
Up-up-up and  
Down-down-down  
Top and Bottom  
Now turn around  
Stamp the ground  
Snap 1...2...3...Stop!!!

Close, close, close  
Now far away  
Open your mouth and  
Say "Hey!"  
Turn to the left,  
Turn to the right  
Close your fingers  
Tight...tight...tight.

Open, close  
Open, close  
Put your finger  
On your nose.  
Touch your front,  
Now your back,  
Give yourself a great big clap!

*Variations:*

1. *Change body parts and motions in chant. Chant faster and lower, quieter and louder, etc.*

## CHANTS

**Group 1-**Create an original rhythmic chant with movement and gestures about the growing cycle. Include key concepts you want your students to know and remember. Keep it simple and short.

**Group 2-**Create an original rhythmic chant with movement and gestures about any unit of study you are working on with your students (e.g. history of a state or a country, products of a state or country, life cycle of a creature, water cycle, etc.) for your chant. Include key concepts you want your students to know and remember. Keep it simple and short.

**Group 3-**Create an original rhythmic chant with movement and gestures about healthy foods or the food pyramid. Include key concepts you want your students to know and remember. Keep it simple and short.

## Motion Sound Activity

Students create motions that correspond to a subject that is being reviewed. If the topic was action verbs, the students would generate a list of action verbs and a motion that relates to the meaning of that word.

After the list is generated, the students can review the entire list by chanting the words and doing the motions simultaneously.

**Group A-** We are studying geometric forms. Present 4 facts about a circle. Create a circle with your group and find motions/actions that define: diameter, circumference, radius and you add one more.

**Group B-**We have been studying Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad. Present with motions 3 facts you know about this amazing African American wWoman. Some facts you may want to include are: she made 19 trips to carry slaves north to freedom; she followed the North Star; she had a sleeping disorder caused by a head injury that made her fall asleep anytime or place; she led 100's of slaves to freedom; her last trip was to free her family; the Underground Railroad was really a group of people who used their homes; wagons, boats, and barns to hide and protect runaway slaves.

**Group C-**We are studying homonyms (homophones). Present with motions 3 pair of homonyms for example: hair and hare, etc.

**Group D-** We have been studying different Native American Tribes. The tribes in the Pacific Northwest used totem poles to protect them from evil spirits and to pay tribute to the animal spirits that protected them. Become a totem pole and present 4 facts about them.

## **The Punctuation Game**

This drama warm up activity is based on the work of the comedian Victor Borge. He used his voice and body to create sounds and motions for punctuation marks as he read a story. The exaggerated sounds and motions he made were hilarious. I have adapted his comedy routine and added more educational content.

### **Instructions:**

Make this sound and add a motion that resembles the punctuation mark when you discover any of these punctuation marks are missing from a sentence.

Period	pt
Comma	neep
Question Mark	ooo pt
Exclamation Mark	ft pt
Apostrophe	zt
Opening quote	“ha ha”
Closing quote	“ho ho”
Spelling error	oops
Capital letter	Clap of hands

### **Sample Sentence**

**Stop running yelleed mr Jones the school custoodian.**

### Environment Orchestra

**Objectives:** To warm up voice and body, to explore setting

**Reading Objective:** Developing sensory images of the setting

**Grade Level:** Pre-K to 6

**Materials:** None

**Group Size:** Small groups or entire class

**Classroom Setup:** A circle or at desks

#### Procedure

##### Steps:

- (1) Select one environment; e.g., New York, Tokyo, Washington, D.C., the zoo, a factory, a train station, an airport, a farm, etc. The topic here is New York.
- (2) Have the class identify what sounds are part of that environment.
- (3) Have the students recreate these sounds through their voices and bodies.
- (4) Once five or six sounds have been identified and imitated, divide the class into groups. Give each group a sound.
- (5) Explain that the class will now become the orchestra, playing the symphony of this particular environment. You will conduct. Provide the class with motions for louder, softer, faster, slower, stop, and start, etc. The conductor controls it all by the motions.

#### Dialogue:

(2) *What sounds would you hear in New York City? We would hear the harbor, taxis, horns, police whistles, people walking, and street vendors. Good.*

(3) *Who can make a sound like a boat in New York harbor? Let's all try that together. Now who can make a taxi sound? Good. Let's try that, etc.*

(4) *I want Row One to be the harbor sounds. Let me hear you. Now Row Two I want you to be street vendors, etc.*

(5) *You are now the orchestra playing the Symphony Number One of New York City. When I make this motion, I want you to begin. This means softer. This means louder. This means faster, and this means slower. And this means start, and this means stop. Orchestra, are you ready? Then let's begin...*

### Points to Consider for Environment Orchestra

1. Before you begin conducting the orchestra, clarify the ground rules. Encourage the students not to talk or laugh but to listen. As the conductor, do not talk. Just clarify your hand signals for the students and let your hands do the talking. If the activity is pure sound, the students are more likely to *enter the world of the story*.
2. Try to make the person who gives a sound the *section leader* for that sound. Use only **3-4 sounds**.
3. Before you conduct the orchestra, *paint the setting* for the students with your words and your tone of voice. Through your use of adjectives and voice allow them to transport to the world of the story in their imagination. This will help to establish both place and mood. Introduce the orchestra with the title and author of the book.  
*" Sounds we predict we might hear in the setting of the book, Legend of the Blue Bonnet by Tomie DePaola. The setting is the dry, drought infested lands of Texas where people are thirsty and starving."*
4. End the activity with *applause* and a raise of hands to see how many got a sense of the setting.

### Variations for Environment Orchestra

1. For young children or ESOL students, use a picture in the book to prompt appropriate sounds of the setting, if the children are not familiar with the world of the story.
2. If a book is filled with sounds, feel free to give the students a list of the sounds you need for the story. For example in *Swimmy*, by Leo Lionni, there are many sea creatures in the book. You can provide the students with a list of the creatures and have them create the appropriate sound for each animal.
3. The location could be the mind of a character at a particular time in the story and not a physical location.
4. Incorporate the sounds in the reading/telling of the story. This can be used as a *listening task* for the students to re-create throughout the reading/telling of the story.
5. Incorporate the sounds in the opening and closing of the dramatization (*reality to fantasy*). Use the sounds to travel to the world of the book and use them in quiet tones to travel home.

**Please note:** If the class gets too stimulated by moving and chanting the sounds of the setting, do not take it to the full orchestra level. After you have done the moving and chanting for several books, they will eventually be able to do the entire activity.

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## Imaginary Door

1. Guide the students to draw a door, window, porthole, etc. to the setting of the story. Use the appropriate entry way based on the setting of the book. For example, if the setting is a farm have the students draw a barn door. If the setting is the ocean, have them draw a porthole. Have the class create the entry way all together. This builds concentration and cooperation.
2. Once the class has drawn the entry way, have them open the door and see and/or hear the sounds or sights of the setting. Younger students (grades K-2) can envision sights as well as sounds. Older students (grades 3-5) can imagine sounds.

*"Let's pick up our magic chalk and draw a door up one side, across the top, down the other side and across the bottom. Now let's draw a door knob. Good. Now put your chalk down because when we open our door we are going to hear some sounds of our setting. Are you ready? Let's do it together. Open your door, listen, now close it. What did you hear?"*
3. The sounds they hear could be used in the creation of an *Environment Orchestra*.

## Story Can Theatre

Story Can Theatre's roots are in a technique called Coffee Can Theatre devised by Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning through the Arts artist, Michael Littman. In this storytelling technique, miniatures and small toys are removed one by one from an opaque container. Each object represents a character, object or part of the setting of the story.

### Planning

- Select a developmentally appropriate story and one that you can easily find or create toys/objects that correspond with the characters, setting and/or important elements of the story.
- Find and/or create toys/props to represent each character and, if possible, some element of the setting.
- Place the toys/props in a container that is opaque or solid and that in some way is attractive and/or represents the content or culture of the story. If you want a fancier container, you can decorate it.
- Place the toys in the container in the reverse order you need them for the story. This will prepare you to take them out in the correct sequence.
- If necessary, place and tape inside the container an index card with the order of the story to remind you of the sequence of the story. You can simply look down and see what needs to be taken out next.
- Rehearse the story, using a different voice for each character.
  - Plan *Listening Task(s)*-chant or sound with gestures/motion for the students to say at 2-4 intervals during the story (see *Listening Task* description on the following pages).
  - Take out each object as you introduce it in the story.

- As each character speaks:
  - Hold the toy by the outer edge so that children can see the toy completely.
  - Create a different voice for each character.
  - Move each character slightly as it speaks.
  - Focus your eyes on the character that is speaking.
  - If two characters are speaking, have them face each other and move each character slightly as it speaks.
  - If you are also narrating, look directly out at the students when you narrate.
    - Key thing to remember:
      - Narrate: look out to students
      - Character speaking: focus on the character that is speaking.
- Use a flat surface as your stage-a short table, flat topped plastic tub, wooden toy ironing board, a stack of long flat blocks, etc. The stage should be approximately 1 foot wide and 2-3 feet long.
- Envision and plan as a director. How you can use this stage area to best tell the story?
  - How will you set the toys on the stage so the relationships and actions are clear?
  - Where will you place each character/object after you use them to keep place, action and character relationships clear?
  - If a character/object is seen only once, and then is not part of the action, you may want to place it back in the container or in some way out of sight.
- When the story has been told and the sequence of the story reviewed, plan a scene the students can all dramatize. Use the *Steps for Effective Story Dramatization* on the following pages and the *Planning Sheet for Story Dramatization* at the back of the hand out to help you plan the dramatization of the scene or the entire story.

## Presenting the Story

- Tape out a large rectangle as an acting area. Ask students to sit on or behind the tape line. Tape may not be needed, if there is a large area rug on the floor. The students can sit on or behind the outer edge of the carpet.
- Show the book and announce the title and author.
- Then explain that after you tell the story they are going to act out part or the entire story. They are going to become actors.
- Do a warm up of one of the main characters of the story. Have them stand and take on the body of the character and predict something the character might say based on the problem in the story (see *Becoming Actors* activity). Introduce the *Drama Cues: Places, Action, Freeze and Curtain*. Rehearse it with the group and have them become the characters.
- Explain to them how they just used their acting tools and skills. If possible get them to tell you what changed about them in order for them to become the character so that they identify the tools and skills. For young children 3-5 (Prek-K) you do not need to introduce concentration. Post a sign that includes the acting tools- voice, body, imagination and the acting skill cooperation (see *Acting Tools* on previous page). Then ask the students to sit and begin the story.
- Tell the story using all the plans rehearsed above.
- When the story is done have the students applaud themselves as good listeners

## Reviewing the Story

- After telling the story:
  - Sequence the story. Tell the students you want to see how smart they are and if they were really good listeners. Ask them to retell the story. Mix up the toys and then ask them what came out number one first, number two second, etc. If they cannot get it after one or two guesses, show them or give them a hint that might help them get the answer, e.g. "The next animal barks" or "The next animal is bigger than this animal and flies".
  - Line up the toys from left to right from the students perspective. It will seem backward for you, but it is training their eyes to read from left to right.
  - Then tell the students it is time for them to be actors.
  - If you can, leave the toys out for the students to see the sequence of the story. However, the toys are very attractive for the students. They are eager to touch them, so it does not always work to leave them out. . Do not leave them on the floor however or the students will grab them. If there is not a higher place to put them (chalk tray, desk) have the students count the objects as you put them back in your container.

## Dramatizing a scene or the story

- Put your plan of dramatizing into place.
- Follow the steps outlined in the *Steps for Effective Story Dramatization and the Planning Sheet for Story Dramatization..*
- Ask the students to warm up briefly by becoming 1-2 characters in the story or warm up by rehearsing a challenging/difficult moment. Remind them of the acting tools and skills. Refer to the chart.
- Assign parts using the entire group as much as possible. For young children (3-5 years of age) do this quickly as taking turns is not their strength.
- Take them from reality to fantasy with the sound.
- Narrate with descriptive language to promote the students' oral language.
- Bring them back to reality with the sound.
- Ask them to applaud their work

## Reflecting on the Drama Experience

- Go back to the Acting Tools and skills and remind them of what they used and how well they used them.
- Have the students take turns putting the objects away back in the container. Students can answer a comprehension question about the object as they return it to the container.
- For young children, after telling the story, if possible, leave the container of toys in a center for the students to retell the story and create new stories with the same characters. .
- Students write and/or draw the story in sequence.

Students can write and/or draw in their Response Journals based on a question or prompt provided by the teacher.

## Simultaneous Dramatization with Dialogue

- ◆ Students simultaneously play a character in the story. The teacher cues all the students to create the character's body and speak in the character's voice. Together, all the students spontaneously devise their own language and deliver a monologue of the character's thoughts and feelings. The teacher provides the cue to end the drama.
- ◆ This is a good structure to use mid-story before the students know the entire plot. It encourages students to predict what might happen in the story, to use inference to demonstrate their comprehension of the story up to this point, to explore voice of a character, and to devise dialogue.

**Sample Language:** *Actors, find your Personal Space. Everyone will now play the beggar. It is the moment the third family refuses to give you food. You are starving and do not understand why everyone has refused to help you. When I say "Places," show me the body of the hungry beggar. "Places." When I say, "Action," begin speaking as the beggar. What do you say to yourself? What are you thinking, feeling? What do you do? When I say "Freeze," you will stop being the beggar. When I say "Curtain," we will all be ourselves again. "Action."*

- ◆ The same structure can be modified for students working in pairs to enact a two-character scene. Have the students decide who is playing each character and rehearse how they will create the body and voice for each character. Provide a specific scene for the students to enact.

## Dramatic Detail

### Objects as Characters

In Story Dramatization, students can also play objects that may or may not move or speak. Students can play the third family's house or the old woman's door. Students can infer what the door might say to the beggar—"You've come to the right house" or "Go away! Can't you see how busy she is?" or "What do you want?" etc. In this chapter, any references to students playing characters also include students playing objects that move and speak.

## Steps for Effective Story Dramatization

### Preparing for Story Dramatization

#### **Teacher Planning**

Step 1: Select an appropriate text.

- Identify the portion(s) of the text to dramatize.
- Consider Time.
- Gauge Skill Levels.
- Choose Objectives.

Step 2: Determine the key drama and non-arts curriculum objectives.

Step 3: Choose a delivery approach for the story.

- Deliver the text aloud.
- Determine Listening Tasks.
- Deliver the text silently.

Step 4: Determine a procedure for sequencing.

Step 5: Organize the dramatization.

- Identify a role for every student.
- Define the Acting Area.
- Create a plan for blocking the scene or story.
- Identify and plan how to dramatize challenging moments in the text.
- Plan the narration.
  - Include descriptive language.

## Steps for Effective Story Dramatization

Preparing for Story Dramatization

### **Student Preparation**

Step 6: Identify Drama and non-arts curriculum Objectives.

- Conduct pertinent warm-ups.

Step 7: Familiarize students with the text.

- Deliver the scene or story.
- Sequence the plot.

Step 8: Describe the Story Dramatization guidelines.

- Define the Acting Area.
- Revisit the Basic Acting Tools and Skills.
- Clarify roles.
- Review moments that require rehearsal
- Explain the blocking.

### **Conducting the Story Dramatization**

Step 9: Enact the scene or story.

- Transition from reality to fantasy.
- Narrate the action.
  - Use Descriptive Language
- Remain in the fiction.
- Transition from fantasy to reality

### **Reflecting on the Story Dramatization**

Step 10: Assess the Students.

- Observational Assessments
- Reflective Discussions
- Written Assessments
- Assessment Checklists

## Step 1: Select an appropriate text

### Guidelines for Selecting a Scene or Story for Dramatization

The text should have all of these qualities:

- a scene or story that is developmentally appropriate for the students
- characters and objects that students have the drama skills to portray
- a text that connects in some way with classroom content objectives

The text should have some or all of these qualities:

#### *Setting:*

- an intriguing setting that has impact on the story.
- a rich setting that students can dramatize (vocally and physically).
- a setting that opens new worlds to the students.

#### *A Plot:*

- that the students can clearly understand.
- with which students can identify.
- that includes a repetitive pattern (especially for young children).
- that revolves around a dramatic situation—an adventure or a quest.
- that has a clear conflict and/or tension.
- that has the potential to empower students through the dramatization.
- that engages students on a feeling and thinking level.
- that contains individual scenes for short dramatizations.
- that you can envision dramatizing successfully.

#### *Characters:*

- characters with whom the students can strongly identify.
- several minor characters that play significant roles in the story.
- objects vital to the plot that can be played by students as speaking roles.
- characters/objects that can be played by multiple students so that all can participate.
- enough characters so that all students have an opportunity to act, but not so many that the teacher or students will have trouble keeping track of the roles.
- character dialogue clearly stated or clues provided for original dialogue.

#### *A Theme:*

- that students can understand.
- that is meaningful to the students.
- that is important for the students to consider.

## Whole Class Story Dramatization

In Whole Class Story Dramatization the entire class works together to dramatize a scene or story. Individual student actors, pairs, and even small groups contribute to the sequential enactment of a scene or story. Students portray characters and/or objects. The teacher narrates and cues the students to speak. The narration threads the story together, but the dialogue is spontaneously created by the students revealing the students' ability to infer and synthesize the text.

### Step 2: Delivering the Text

If you are delivering a story by telling or reading it aloud, try to include a **Listening Task**.

#### **Definition:**

A listening task is something the students are cued to listen for as the teacher reads or tells a story. The task should be something the students verbalize (a phrase or sound) and do (a motion, gesture, action). There should be one or more pre-planned listening tasks by the teacher so that the students are listening for their cue(s). The listening task(s) should occur sporadically in the story (3-5 times maximum). You do not want students doing a motion and repeating a phrase every minute or they will not be able to focus on the content of the story-they will be too busy listening for their cue(s). Once you introduce the idea of listening tasks to your students they will add spontaneously their own sounds and motions while listening to a story. The sounds created in the *Environment Orchestra* activity, can be used as listening tasks throughout the story.

#### **Rationale:**

Including a listening task(s) while reading or telling a story:

- promotes focus and attention, students are engaged and have a purpose for listening;
- promotes retention and comprehension since students are truly listening;
- addresses the various learning styles of the class, especially the kinesthetic learner;
- supports brain research on the importance of organized movement in the learning process;
- supports brain research on the importance of including the mind, body, and emotions in the learning process.

Teachers cue students by simply pointing to them when it is time for them to respond with the Listening Task or gesturing to them in some other consistent manner. If the story has a repetitive sentence/phrase, another effective cueing device is to simply stop telling/reading the story mid-sentence and wait for the students to provide the Listening Task that completes the sentence.

#### **Sample Listening Tasks are:**

- *A repetitive word or phrase that is found in the text*
- *A created repeating line that fits the story and maintains the integrity of the text.*
- *Repetitive sound effects that are integral to the text and/or the setting*
- *Dialogue a character might say that is implied but not provided in the text.*



## Teacher Preparation

### Step 5: Organize the dramatization

#### Identify a role for every student

Drama is a process that focuses on the participants and is not meant for an audience. In Story Dramatization, it therefore is ideal if all students have a meaningful role in the drama. In drama, more than one person can play a role. People, animals and even objects can talk. Boys can play girls and girls can play boys. This non-traditional form of casting helps you find substantial roles for everyone.

Determine how the scene or story will be cast to include all the students. Create a **Cast List** that divides the roles and assures that all students will participate. Assign the parts just prior to the enactment of the story. Students can volunteer for parts or you can assign them. Post the Cast List so that the students see all the roles.

As you develop your Cast List, examine your scene or story and list all the characters and objects that students could play.

#### Here are some effective ways to involve every student in your classroom cast:

- Create a Sound Effects Section—a group of students whose task is to create the sounds but not to overwhelm the action. They can include gestures, movements to accompany the sounds. (Note: The class might have already created some of the sounds in the warm-up activity *Environment Orchestra*).
- One character can be played by a small group of students.
- Students can play objects that speak.
- Pairs or small groups of students can work together to play an object.
- Double cast major roles—two students can play the same role. (Pairing a verbal student with a less verbal student can work well for promoting language and full class participation).
- Vary the student playing a major role in each new scene of the story. The role switches each time the character interacts with a different character.

Here is a sample **Cast List** for a class of 22+ students dramatizing the classic folktale, **The Three Little Pigs**:

Mother Pig (1 student)  
Pig #1 (1 student)  
House of straw (2 students)  
Door to house (1 student)  
Pig #2 (1 student)  
House of sticks (2 students)  
Door to house (1 student)  
Pig #3 (1 student)  
House of bricks (4 students)  
Door to house (1 student)  
Wolf (3-5 students)  
Pot of hot water (4-5 students)

## **Dramatic Detail**

There may be a few students who do not want to participate in the dramatization. These students may be willing to participate in the Sound Effects Section or in a role played by a small group. It is best to encourage them, but not force them to participate. The students will join in the drama when they feel safe and ready. This could take a few minutes or several days. It is best to focus on the students who are ready to work versus those that are not. Eventually all will join in.

### **Define the Acting Area**

Adequate space is important in all drama work. For Whole Class Story Dramatization, a rectangle taped on the floor provides adequate space for all students to sit and stand. Students can sit/stand on or behind the tape line as they observe and/or wait for their turn to participate in the drama. The inside of the taped space serves as an informal stage.

The tape provides a home-base for students. They know where to sit/stand before they play their parts and where to return when it is time for them to become good audience members. The tape is very effective for young students and for students who are extremely active. For very active students assigning seats on the tape can also be helpful.

Another space option is a Drama Circle. When it is time for students to enact a story, ask them to form large circle. If you use the circle routinely and consistently refer to it as the Drama Circle, students will understand the boundaries in the same way as those created by the tape.

Defining the Acting Area sets clear boundaries for the students. It helps them know when they are in and out of the drama; it provides them with entrance and exit locations and provides them with a clear place for transforming into an attentive audience member. The Acting Area will also influence the blocking you plan for the scene.

### **Create a plan for blocking the scene or story**

Blocking is a theatre directing term that refers to the basic movements of the actors on the stage. Think as director does and create a floor plan of how you want to block actors within the Acting Area so that all the student actors know when and where to go and all the audience members can see them. Generally, you do not want too many students on the "stage" at once as they will have little room to move and the students observing cannot distinguish the characters and the action.

One simple blocking procedure is to ask all the students at the beginning of the drama to stand on/behind the acting tape or drama circle. When it is their turn to act they step into the middle of the rectangle/circle and perform their roles. When their role is completed or if they are waiting to reenter the action, they return to stand on/behind the acting tape/drama circle. This simplifies and streamlines the blocking. It also helps you maintain order during the dramatization.

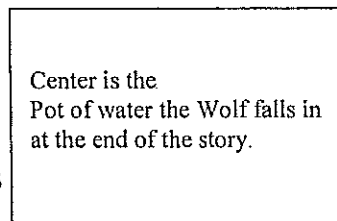
It is helpful to sketch out a floor plan of the different settings of the scene or story within the acting area. One advantage to a rectangular-shaped Acting Area is that each corner of the rectangle can be a different location.

Here is a sample floor plan for "The Three Little Pigs."

**House and Pig #1**

**House and Pig #2**

**House and Pig #3**



**Wolf enters from here**

## Identify and plan how to dramatize challenging moments in the text

In many texts there is a scene or a moment that is highly physical or complicated to dramatize. It is helpful to plan a way to dramatize this moment before beginning the dramatization. Students are apt to get carried away if these scenes are not planned and rehearsed before the drama.

Challenging scenes often have:

- a physical struggle
- lots of characters in the acting area at one time
- many characters moving simultaneously
- an object/character that breaks, spills, is tossed, etc
- high emotion of any kind in particular, anger
- a moment where characters might touch

There are many ways to dramatize challenging moments. Let your students contribute their creative ideas for blocking a difficult moment. When the students contribute to the process, they are more invested in having the moment enacted successfully.

## Plan the narration

**In Whole Class Dramatizations, you also take on a role. You become the narrator—a key role in the dramatization.**

In a Whole Class Dramatization, the narrator:

- serves as the storyteller. Change your voice so that it is different from your normal teacher's voice. Deliver the narration in vocal tones that reflect the action, mood, and dramatic circumstance of the text.
- supplies the thread that begins and ends the dramatization, introduces each character, and connects each event in the scene or story. Familiarize yourself with the correct sequence of the scene or story so that you can retell (not read) it in your own words. The sequencing technique developed in Step 4 and used in Step 7 can serve as guide in helping you retell the story.
- cues the students to speak, but does not provide their dialogue. The cue might be the beginning of a sentence. Your voice should indicate that dialogue is required by the student playing the character who finishes your sentence with dialogue created spontaneously. The narrator promotes the language through descriptive cues and then waits while the students retrieve and create the language.

## *Descriptive Cues*

Cues need to be clear and highly descriptive. The more descriptive the cue, the more language it promotes. Often teachers rely on the cue, "And then he/she said..." to prompt students to speak. This cue will work to some degree, but a more descriptive cue stimulates students to create dialogue that truly reflects the character and the drama's circumstance. This can lead to synthesis and a far deeper comprehension of the text.

Instead of relying on *said*, select a verb that promotes rich dialogue. Below is a list of verbs that stimulate strong character dialogue.

## *The character...*

insisted...

begged...  
pleaded...  
whispered...  
announced...  
interrupted...  
congratulated...  
instructed...  
demanded...  
argued...  
consoled...  
chattered...  
murmured...  
growled...  
cheered...  
cried...  
blurted out...  
yelled...

Use other rich descriptive words to convey the feelings of the characters or the character's reaction(s) to their circumstances. These words will inform the students of how to portray their characters. They will provide clues as to how the character might say a line or react in the situation. Below are some suggested words that convey a feeling.

*The character felt ...*

frustrated  
angry  
hurt  
scared  
lonely  
exhausted  
anxious  
horrified  
on the verge of tears  
terrified  
determined  
surprised  
on top of the world  
flattered  
elated  
thrilled

To prompt even greater language use, combine both types of descriptive words:

- The villagers were so *frustrated* with the beggar that they *shouted*...
- The *determined* beggar *declared*...
- The *anxious* old woman hurriedly *explained*...
- The *horrified* monster *cried out*...
- The *surprised* villagers *cheered*...

## Student Preparation

### Step 6: Identify the Drama and non-arts curriculum objectives

Post and review the lesson's key drama and non-arts curriculum objectives. . Discuss their meanings and clarify any unclear terminology. Simplify the language to meet the grade and ability level of your students.

### Step 8: Describe the Story Dramatization Guidelines.

#### Explain the blocking floor plan

Review with the students your plan for the blocking that you created. Ask the students to take their places in the designated locations. You can post the floor plan you created or simply ask students playing the roles to take the positions you assign to them.

Indicate clearly for the students where they are to be:

- before they enter the acting area as their characters
- when they are enacting their roles
- when they exit the acting area to wait to reenter as a character and/or become audience members.

## Conducting the Story Dramatization

### Step 9: Enact the Scene or story.

Once all the planning has been completed, students are ready to enact the story. The planning makes expectations clear so the students know what to do, when to do it, how to do it and where they should be before during and after their role in the dramatization is complete.

#### Transition from reality to fantasy

Distinguishing boundaries of the fictional world of the drama and the reality of the classroom is an important component in Story Dramatization. It mirrors the theatre convention of the curtains opening at the start of a play and closing at the end. Taking students clearly from the reality of the classroom to the fantasy of the drama is transformative. It elevates the experience and encourages students to suspend disbelief—agree to pretend. It supports their transformation into another time, place, and character.

Language or sounds that help students transition from reality to fantasy and back to reality serve as a valuable control device. The students are clear when to begin and when to stop acting. For younger students who often prefer to remain in character, transitions help to bring them back to the reality of the classroom and prepare them for the transition to the next step in the process.

Sample Language: *We are ready to begin our dramatization. Close your eyes and listen to the sound of the wind chimes. When I count to three the chimes will stop, you will open your eyes and our dramatization of "The Monster Year" will begin. One...two...*

## Methods for Transitioning from Reality to Fantasy

Here are some suggested methods to help students enter and exit the fictional world of the drama:

- Ask students to close their eyes for the count of three upon beginning and ending the dramatization. The eyelids imitate the curtain rising and falling in the theatre. *This is a good and simple transition device to use alone or in combination with any of the other suggestions listed below.*
- Use a special sound or instrument—a whistle, a gong, a tambourine, a chime. The instrument used can reflect the culture of the dramatized text.
- Use sounds students created for the *Environment Orchestra* Chapter xxx, page xxx. Have the sounds get louder as students enter the fictional world and quieter as they leave.
- Turn the lights on and off.

*For young children:*

- Sprinkle invisible magic dust on the students and gather it when leaving the imaginary world.
- Wave a magic wand over the heads of the children.

### **Narrate the action**

Use the cues you planned in *Step Five* to narrate the scene or story. Try to accept the students' dialogue without criticism. Their dialogue will not be an exact replication of the language found in the text, but should reflect the main ideas of the scene or story.

If, however, the dialogue is not consistent with the main idea of the scene or story or if a student does not respond at all to the cue simply say, "Freeze" to briefly stop the action. Quickly solicit the language from the other students. Once the students provide the dialogue, check to see if the student actor playing the character is now ready to say these words. Then reenter the world of the drama by saying, "Action."

Sample Language: *Freeze! Class, what do you think the beggar said to the first villager?* (Class responds with "Please give me some food, I am starving!") *Okay, Vanessa, do you know what to say now? Great and Action!*

If the student still does not deliver any dialogue, freeze the action again. Ask the student if he/she is still comfortable playing the role. If not, ask another student to take the part. If the student still wants to keep the role, but does not speak, invite another student to share the role. By double casting the part, a quiet student or English Second Language Speaker can still fully participate.

### **Remain in the fiction**

Throughout the dramatization you and the students should maintain your roles as narrator and characters/objects consistently. After playing their roles, students should become attentive audience members. In your narrator role, referring to students as their characters, not by their real names, helps keep the illusion of the fictional world.

Sample Language: *"And then the old woman appeared"—versus—"Becky it is time for you to be the old woman."*

If at any point during the drama you feel you need to address an issue outside of the fictional world (behavioral concerns, interruptions, etc.), simply say "Freeze!" Quickly resolve the problem and then say, "Action" to resume the dramatization.

### **Transition from fantasy to reality**

When the dramatization is complete, transition the students back to the reality of the classroom with the same device previously used for entering the drama. Once the students have returned to the classroom, have them show appreciation for their work. Applause often works well!

*Sample Language: Close your eyes and listen to the sound of the wind chimes. When I count to three, the chimes will stop, you will open your eyes and our dramatization will be over. We will be ourselves again and we will return to our classroom. One...two...*

## **Reflecting on the Story Dramatization**

### **Step 10: Assess the Students.**

An arts integrated lesson includes measurable objectives in both the arts and the non-arts curriculum areas. Assessment, therefore, should be possible for both content areas. Included below are various ways to assess drama and a non-arts curriculum. The non-arts curriculum used as a sample below is reading comprehension.

#### **Observational Assessments**

Observing, listening, and taking notes as students plan, enact, observe, and reflect on their Story Dramatizations provide valuable information regarding the extent to which students have achieved the key drama objectives and reading comprehension objectives for the lesson.

It is helpful to select five students to observe during several integrated drama lessons. Record your observations. This information will be valuable in helping you understand the needs and progress of the students. Use the questions below to guide your observations.

*From a Drama Perspective*

#### **Voice**

- Notice who creates dialogue that is "in character."
- Notice how well students playing characters vary their vocal tone.
- Note how effective each group of students playing a character created a collective voice.

#### **Body**

- Observe how the students modify their bodies to portray the characters.
- Note how the students adjust their walk, gestures, and movements.
- Consider how each group of students created a collective body for their character/object.
- Notice whether students who are portraying objects pose their bodies to effectively resemble the object.

#### **Cooperation**

- Consider how well the students listen to each other and to you.
- Observe how students work collaboratively to create group objects and characters.
- Note the manner in which students respect the opinions of their peers during the planning, enacting, and reflecting segments of the drama.

### *From a Reading Comprehension Perspective:*

#### Determining Importance

- Note how well students' dialogue conveys the main ideas of the scene or story.
- Consider which students know the sequence of the action and are prepared to enter and exit on cue.

#### Inferring

- Watch which students make logical predictions as you deliver the scene or story.
- Notice which students create dialogue that reflects effective "logical guesses."
- Observe which students create actions that indicate they "read between the lines" of the text.

#### Synthesis

- During the drama, watch which students take on the personality of their characters and speak and respond from that new perspective.
- Observe which students are able to devise dialogue for their characters to convey the essence/meaning of the scene or story.

After several Story Dramatizations, review your observation notes. Use the trends you glean from the notes to guide adjustments for the next Story Dramatization.

## **Reflecting on the Story Dramatization**

### **Reflective Discussions**

Use the drama and reading comprehension objectives to guide discussions about the effectiveness of the Story Dramatization. These discussions allow students to examine their own work, become aware of how and when they met the lesson's objectives, consider the strengths and weakness of the experience, and set goals for future Story Dramatizations.

Open-ended questions motivate the highest quality reflective discussions. Pose questions that:

- recall elements of the drama experience.
- encourage praise.
- encourage change.

### **Questions that recall elements of the drama experience**

Refer to the posted objectives and ask the students if, when, and how they saw each of the objectives met. Ask students to provide an example to support their statements. Here are some model questions you may want to use with your students. Select a question or two from each category that fit your students' age, abilities and needs as well as your time constraints.

#### *From a Drama Perspective*

- Think about the group that played the Sound Effects Section. What sounds did they make with their voices that were effective and helped us envision the setting?
- What dialogue did the students playing the houses create? Which lines seemed right for the situation?
- How would you describe the Body movements of each student who played the \_\_\_\_\_?" What did you notice about their uses of Body that were similar? What was different?
- During our dramatization, when did you feel that you belonged to an ensemble?
- Sound Effects Section, how did you use Cooperation in deciding which sounds and gestures the group would use?



### *From a Reading Comprehension Perspective*

- What words/phrases did we hear the characters repeat in this dramatization? Why were they repeated?
- How well did we remember all the events in the scene or story? Are there any main points we should have added?
- What important details did we remember? Which ones did we forget?
- After you dramatized the scene or story, did you think about it in a new way? If so, how?

### **Questions that encourage praise**

It is beneficial for students to give positive feedback to their peers once they have a clear understanding of the Acting Tools and Skills and the objectives for the lesson. As students **compliment each other**, they build a sense of ensemble. They build a community that strives towards excellence. When initially asking these questions, it is helpful if you give feedback first. Your praise of specific students/groups set expectations that the students will strive to meet them.

### **Teaching Tip**

For young students, low ability students, and English as Second Language speakers, you may need to model the feedback for the first few discussions. These students can reflect on the drama, but you may need to simplify the questions or ask fewer questions. The answers you receive may only be words or phrases. However, these students can still complete this task at their own level of language and thought. They can identify what went well and why in very simple, but clear, terms.

### *From a Drama Perspective*

- Who surprised you with how much they sounded like the character/object? How did they accomplish this change?
- What group, other than your own, would you like to compliment for their use of Body? Why?
- Which students participated in ways that helps us build our community of actors? What did they do?

### *From A Reading Comprehension Perspective*

- Who surprised you with the details they remembered from the scene or story? What details added to our dramatization?
- Who picked up on a clue in this story you missed? What clue was it?
- Who added something new to the scene or story—an action, a phrase, a body position—that made the scene or story even better?
- What moment in the dramatization made you laugh or made you feel afraid? What did the actors do to make that happen?

### **Questions that encourage change**

It is beneficial for students to self-assess and examine their own work. Questions encouraging praise focus outward to other classmates. Questions encouraging change focus on the **self**. Students examine their own roles in the drama and set goals for improvement.

### *From a Drama Perspective*

- How would you like to improve on your use of Voice for our next Story Dramatization?
- How do you wish you had used your Body differently in this dramatization?
- How might you cooperate better with the other student actors in our next dramatization?
- What would you change about the way you behaved or treated another person during this dramatization?

### *From A Reading Comprehension Perspective*

- What did you forget to say that you know was important in today's drama? How will knowing this help you in our next Story Dramatization?
- Did you use any dialogue that did not fit the character? If so, why didn't it seem right? How will this information help you in our next Story Dramatization?
- What would you like to change or revise if we dramatized this scene or story again?

### **Self Evaluation**

Since you have several roles in the drama—narrator, director, facilitator, it is helpful if you also consider what you did well and what you would want to change for the next Story Dramatization.

- Were you able to maintain your voice and role of the narrator throughout or did you call students by their real names and use only your teacher voice?
- Did you plan well?
- Did the students understand what to do and where and when they were to stand, move and sit?
- Did you plan the blocking well? Could everyone see the action on stage?

Review the *Planning Sheet for Story Dramatization* at the end of this hand out to consider what you did well and what you need to work on. You may want to share some of your self-assessment with students during the reflective discussions. This sharing helps students know that you are part of the ensemble working to improve your Acting Tools and Skills.

### **Written Assessments**

Story Dramatization can be a strong writing motivator. Students are often eager to write after completing an effective dramatization. Written assessments provide another window into the students' comprehension of drama and the text.

### *From a Drama Perspective*

#### **Brief Responses**

- Write one line you heard in today's dramatization that you feel was "in character." Based on what we know about this character, give two reasons you feel this line was a good choice.
- List the sounds the Sound Effect section created. Star the ones that sounded the most realistic. Add two more you would have liked to have heard.
- List three words (adjectives) to describe the way you stand and move. List three words (adjectives) to describe the way the character you played stands and moves. Write and/or draw how you changed your body to become that character.
- In your journal, write and draw a description of the character you played in today's lesson.

#### **Extended Responses**

- Max, when he played the monster, started to wail and then cry as he disappeared. Do you think those sounds and actions fit the character? Why or why not? Include three reasons to support your answer. Include a prediction as to where the monster went after he disappeared.
- Describe the way you envisioned the posture, movements and walk of your character. Include the following:
  - Describe how you envisioned the character.
  - Compare the way you envisioned it to how you portrayed the character.

- What aspects of Body did you do well?
- What do you want to improve for the next dramatization?
- When did you feel you belonged to a “community of actors” during today’s drama? Include in your response what that phrase means to you.

*From a Reading Comprehension Perspective*

**<D> Brief Responses**

- Write and/or draw the three main events in this story. Include an event in the beginning, the middle and the end of the story. Write one line of dialogue you remember from each of the three events.
- Summarize the entire scene or story we dramatized in five sentences.
- Think about what could happen next if this story continued. Create a title for a sequel to this story. Draw a picture to go with it.
- In your Response Journals, describe a moment a character in the drama made you smile, laugh or feel scared, etc. What did the student actor do to make you feel this way?
- Write and/or draw a time you felt the same way a character was feeling in the story.
- List two of your favorite parts in the scene or story. Explain why they are your favorites.

**Extended Responses**

- Choose three details you heard in the dialogue of our dramatization and explain why they added to the effectiveness of the drama.
- Write a sequel to this scene or story that predicts what would happen next. Where does the monster go? Where did the beggar go? Include three inferences from what we know about the characters and the situation. Underline the inferences. Create a title for your story. We will dramatize several of the best stories
- Sometimes characters say one thing, but mean another. Think of two lines a character said in our dramatization that meant something else. Write the lines and explain what the characters really meant.

## Assessment Checklists

The checklist provides a tool for students to self-assess, for the teacher to assess the students, and for both the teacher and students to collaboratively reflect on the drama work. Together students and teacher can set goals for future Story Dramatizations.

### STORY DRAMATIZATION ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Student Actor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

During the Story Dramatization, the Actor...	Consistently 3	Often 2	Occasionally 1	No evidence 0
<b>IMAGINATION/MIND</b>	x	x	x	x
...agrees to pretend.				
... interacts with real and/or imagined characters and objects.				
<b>VOICE</b>	x	x	X	x
...varies vocal tone and pitch to create character voices and/or sound effects				
...creates and delivers dialogue that is "in character."				
...projects—speaks loudly enough to be heard.				
...speaks with expression that reflects the personality, traits, thoughts, and feelings of the character.				
<b>BODY</b>	x	x	X	x
...modifies posture, poses, gestures, movements and/or walk.				
...uses facial expressions that communicate the thoughts and feelings of the character.				
<b>COOPERATION</b>	x	x	X	x
...works as a member of the ensemble.				
<b>CONCENTRATION</b>	x	x	X	x
... focuses intently on the given drama task.				
... remains "in character."				

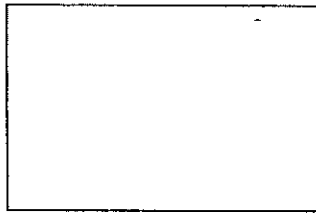
Total \_\_\_\_\_

32-36 Standing Ovation  
 27-31 Round of Applause  
 22-26 Polite Clapping  
 0-21 Back to Rehearsal

Personal Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

## PLANNING SHEET FOR STORY DRAMATIZATION

- What are your Drama Objectives? What are your Non-arts Curriculum Objectives?
- What skill building/warm-up activities will you use to teach/reinforce your Drama Objective(s)? How do your chosen warm-ups prompt students to create dialogue for the scene or story dramatization?
- As you read/tell the story what Listening Task (motion and word/phrase) will the students repeat during the reading/telling of the story? How will you cue them to say and do the action? Can they also repeat this during the dramatization?
- How will you sequence the story/scene (transparency, chart, toys, pictures, etc.)?
- How will get all the students involved? Look for the scene(s) or the moment(s) where you can envision everyone being involved. How can everyone have a meaningful role? Is there a way for every character/object to speak? Can more than one person play a role? Create a Cast List.
- What is the difficult moment in the story that you need to rehearse before you act out the story so that the group will stay focused and in control? How will you solve this difficult moment?
- How will you organize the action (blocking) so that everyone knows what to do, where to go and so that all the students can see? Blocking Planning Diagram:



- How will you transition the students clearly from reality to fantasy and back to reality?
- How will you narrate to promote expressive language? Write 3 cues you will use with the students to facilitate them to speak as the character. Be sure to include descriptive language.
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
- How will you assess the Story Dramatization from both drama and the non-arts curriculum perspectives?

## Sample Five-Day Lesson Plan

### DAY 1

- ◆ Introduce the text and explain to students that they will be actors who dramatize the story.
- ◆ Introduce the students to the acting tools and basic acting skills.
- ◆ Conduct several warm-ups/skill building activities that develop the acting tools and skills, such as *Personal Space*, *Becoming Actors*, or *Mirrors*.
- ◆ Read/tell part or the entire story using Listening Tasks.
- ◆ Dramatize one key moment in the story.

### DAY 2

- ◆ Review and warm-up the acting tools and skills using any of the warm-ups they need to work on from the previous day or add new ones.
- ◆ Read/tell another part of the story or the entire text.
- ◆ Dramatize one key moment in the story.

### DAY 3

- ◆ Review/warm-up acting tools and skills using any of the warm-ups they need to work on from the previous days or add new ones.
- ◆ Read/tell the remainder of the story.
- ◆ Sequence the entire story or the section of the story you plan to dramatize.
- ◆ Use *Simultaneous Dramatization with Dialogue* to prepare the students for the *Whole Class Format Dramatizations*. Use the *Key Steps for Story Dramatization* as a guide.
- ◆ Assess the drama by using Reflective Discussions.

### DAY 4

- ◆ Repeat the process outlined above with a second scene or redo the entire story alternating parts.
- ◆ Assess the drama through brief written responses and/or the *Story Dramatization Student Response Sheet*.

### DAY 5

- ◆ Review/warm-up acting tools and skills using any of the warm-ups they need to work on from the previous days or add new ones.
- ◆ Review the sequence of the story.
- ◆ Have the students create a new ending to the story.
- ◆ Use *Whole Class Form Dramatizations* to act out the new ending.
- ◆ Assess the drama through reflective discussion and extended written response (pages 98-100).

## **Creative Kids Response Sheet**

**1. Think about who you saw today do a good job using one or more of their acting tools and skills.**

- **Write the name of the person:**
- **What character did they play?**
- **What acting tool or skill did they use well?**
- **Why did you select that person?**

**2. When you act out stories you use your own words not just the words found in the book. When your new words make sense and fit the character this is called inference.**

- **Write below one line you or somebody else said today that was not in the book but fit the character and the story.**
- **Why was it a good line to say?**

**3. When you act out a story next week which acting tool or skill would you like to improve upon?**

- **Why did you choose this one?**

## Reflective Discussions

### 1. Ask students questions that encourage praise for their peers.

**Drama:** *"Let's think about the use of voice. What person or group, not you or your group, used voice in an effective way today? Tell me what you heard and why it was so effective for the character."*

**Reading Comprehension:** *"What line(s) of dialogue did you hear today that was very imaginative and showed good use of inference?"*

### 2. Ask students questions that encourage change through self-assessment.

**Drama:** *"Did you like the body you created for your character? What changes would you make if you played that character again?"*

**Reading Comprehension:** *"Think about what your character said today. What would you choose to revise? Why?"*

## Written Assessments

### Brief Response:

**Drama:** Create a web that includes words to describe a character in the story you did not play. Then transform your body into the character to reflect these characteristics.

**Reading Comprehension:** Write a question about something you wonder about one character in the story.

### Extended Response:

**Drama:** In 3 paragraphs, describe how you used concentration (*or any of the tools and skills*) in today's drama. Include:

- ❖ when you were pleased with your concentration,
- ❖ how you might like to improve on it,
- ❖ why concentration is important in drama.

**Reading Comprehension:** Melissa said when she played \_\_\_\_\_ in the drama, "It is not over yet!" Was that a good inferential statement? Find two details in the text to prove your answer.



## Glossary of Basic Drama and Theatre Terms

- “Action”—a spoken cue that signals actors to begin acting
- actor—the person who plays a role or character in any dramatic activity
- audience—persons who observe and react to a dramatic activity
- believability—portrayal of a role in a manner that is credible and convincing
- blocking—the basic movements and positions of the actors on stage
- cast—all the actors who play characters in a dramatic activity
- characters—the people or animals (and also inanimate objects that move and talk) in a story or play
- concentration—an acting skill; the actor’s focused attention to what’s happening at each moment during the drama.
- cue—any word, sound, or action that signals the beginning of another word, sound, or action.
- “Curtain”—This spoken word (generally used in rehearsals) indicates that the dramatic action is about to start. It may also be said to indicate the completion of a scene.
- dialogue—the words spoken by actors playing characters in a drama
- director—the person who interprets a play, rehearses the actors, and makes artistic decisions about a dramatic production
- ensemble—the cooperation of all the people to work as a team while participating in drama.
- focus—the words, actions, or images intended to receive the audience’s attention
- “Freeze”—a spoken cue that signals actors to stop whatever they are doing and remain perfectly still and silent.
- improvisation—the spontaneous, unscripted creation of a scene or dialogue by actors
- “in character”—acting choices that accurately communicate information about the character and the drama’s circumstances
- mime/pantomime—the silent use of body, hand, and face movements to show imaginary objects or experiences
- motivation—the reasons behind a character’s actions and words
- “Places”—a spoken signal for actors to get ready to begin acting and for observers to give their attention to the actors.
- playwright—the person who writes a play
- plot—the beginning, middle, and end of a play or story
- Point of Concentration—a specific spot or small object upon which actors focus their eyes and energy
- props—objects that actors hold or use while on stage
- rehearsal—a practice session for actors
- role—a character in any dramatic activity
- role drama/role play—an improvisational drama strategy guided by an idea or objective in which the actor pretends to be someone or something else
- scene—a portion of a play or story that has a beginning, middle and end
- sense memory—recall of personal feelings, sensations, and experiences by actors to help them portray characters in drama activities
- script—a play in written format
- setting—the place and time of a play or story
- side coaching—teacher or director comments to the actors while they are acting
- suspension of disbelief—an implicit agreement among actors and audience to agree to pretend that the dramatic action is real and happening for the first time
- teacher-in-role—a drama technique in which the teacher plays a role and interacts with the students playing roles.

## Suggested Book List

The code (P) indicates a Primary Level text. The Code (I) indicates an intermediate level text. The code (M) indicates a Middle School level text.

- Aardema, Verna. 1969. *Who's In Rabbit's House*. NY: E.P. Dutton. (P & I)  
 Aardema, Verna. 1975. *Why Mosquitoes Buzz in People's Ears*. NY: Dial Books. (P & I)  
 Alexander, Lloyd. 1992. *The Fortune Tellers*. NY. Puffin. (P & I)  
 Babbitt, Natalie. 1975. *Tuck Everlasting*. NY: Scholastic. (M)  
 Blume, Judy. 1986. *Freckle Juice*. NY: Yearling Books. (I & M)  
 Boyce Frank Cottrell. 2004. *Millions* NY: HarperCollins. (I & M)  
 Brett, Jan. 1989. *The Mitten*. NY: Putnam. (P)  
 Carle, Eric. 1977. *The Grouchy Ladybug*. NY: Scholastic. (P)  
 Carle, Eric. 1995. *Walter the Baker*. NY: Scholastic. (P)  
 Cherry, Lynne. 1993. *The Great Kapok Tree*. NY: Scholastic  
 Cronin, Doreen. 2000. *Click, Clack, Moo Cows That Type*. NY: Scholastic. (P)  
 Climo, Shirley. 1995. *The Little Red Ant and The Great Big Crumb*. NY: Clarion. (P)  
 Curtis, Christopher, Paul. 1999. *Bud, Not Buddy*. NY: Scholastic. (I & M)  
 De Paola, Tomie. 1992. *Jamie O'Rourke and the Big Potato*. NY: Putnam. (P & I)  
 De Paola, Tomie. 1983. *The Legend of the Bluebonnet*. NY: Putnam. (P & I)  
 De Paola, Tomie. 1975. *Stregna Nona*. NY: Simon and Schuster. (P)  
 Fleischman, Sid. 1986. *The Whipping Boy*. NY: William Morrow. (I & M)  
 Gipson, Fred. 1945. *Old Yeller*. Harper Collins. (I & M)  
 George, Jean, Craighead. *Julie of the Wolves*. NY: HarperCollins. (I & M)  
 Hesse, Karen. 1997. *Out of the Dust*. NY: Scholastic. (M)  
 Lowry, Lois, 1989. *Number the Stars*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin. (I & M)  
 Kimmel, Eric A. 1988. *Anansi and the Moss-Covered Rock*. NY: Holiday House. (P & I)  
 Kimmel, Eric, A. 1988. *The Chanukkah Guest*. NY: Holiday House. (P & I)  
 Kimmel, Eric, A. 1994. *The Three Princes*. NY: Holiday House. (P & I)  
 Leaf, Munro. 1936. *The Story of Ferdinand*. NY: Scholastic. (P & I)  
 L'Engle, Madeleine. 1962. *A Wrinkle in Time*. NY: Dell. (M)  
 Lionni, Leo. 1963. *Swimmy*. NY: Scholastic. (P)  
 Lionni, Leo. 1967. *Frederick*. NY: Scholastic. (P)  
 Lowry, Lois. 1993. *The Giver*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. (M)  
 Luenn Nancy. 1990. *Nessa's Fish*. NY: Scholastic. (P)  
 Noble, Trinkia Hakes. 1980. *The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash*. NY: E.P. Dutton. (P)  
 MacDonald, Amy. 2003. *Little Beaver and The Echo*. London: Candlewick Press. (P)  
 McCully, Emily Arnold. 1993. *Mirette on the High Wire*. NY: Scholastic.  
 McDermott, Gerald. 1972. *Anansi The Spider*. NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. (P)  
 Moreton, Dan. 1997. *La Cucaracha Martina: A Caribbean Folktale*. NY: Turtle Press. (P)  
 Myers, Walter Dean. 1988. *Scorpions*. NY: Harper Collins. (M)  
 Noble, Trinkia Hakes. 1980. *The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash*. NY: E.P. Dutton. (P)  
 Orwell, George. 1946. *Animal Farm*. NY: Harcourt Brace. (M)  
 Paterson, Katherine. 1999. *Katherine Paterson Treasury*. NY: Barnes and Nobles. (I & M)  
 Paterson, Katherine. 1990. *The Tale of the Mandarin Ducks*. NY: Penguin. (I & M)  
 Rowling, J.K. 1999. *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. NY: Scholastic. (I & M)  
 Sachar, Louis. 1998. *Holes*. NY: Random House. (I & M)  
 San Souci, Robert D. 1989. *Talking Eggs*. NY: Scholastic. (I & M)  
 Scieszka, Jon. 1989. *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!* NY: Puffin. (P & I)  
 Sharmat, Mitchell. 1980. *Gregory, the Terrible Eater*. NY: Scholastic. (P)  
 Slobodkina, Esphyr. 1968. *Caps for Sale*. NY: Harper Collins. (P)  
 Spinelli, Jerry. 1997. *Wringer*. NY: Harper Trophy. (M)

- Stephoe, John. 1987. *Mufaro's Beautiful Daughters*. NY: Scholastic. (I & M)
- Shusterman, Neal. 2003. *Full Tilt*. NY: Simon and Shuster. (M)
- Tresselt, Alvin. 1964. *The Mitten*. NY: Lothrop, Lee and Shepard. (P)
- Turner, Ann. 1992. *Katie's Trunk*. NY: Aladdin. (I & M)
- Turner, Ann. 1987. *Nettie's Trip South*. NY: Simon and Schuster. (I & M)
- Twain, Mark 1994. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*. NY: Puffin (I & M)
- Twain, Mark. 1881. *The Prince and the Pauper*. London: Penguin. (I & M)
- Wisniewski, David. 1992. *Sundiata, Lion King of Mali*. NY:Clarion. (I & M)
- White, E.B., 1945. *Stuart Little*. NY: Harper and Row. (I)
- Wisniewski, David. 1991. *Rain Player*. NY: Clarion-Books. (I & M)
- Yagawa, Sumiko. 1979. *The Crane Wife*. NY: Mulberry. (I & M)
- Yolen, Jane.1992. *Encounter*. Orlando: Harcourt Brace. (I & M)
- Zemach, Margot. 1990. *It Could Always Be Worse*. NY: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. (P & I)

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- Heinig, Ruth B. 1992. *Improvisation with Favorite Tales: Integrating Drama into the Reading/Writing Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Kelner, Lenore B. 1993. *The Creative Classroom: A Guide for Using Creative Drama in the Classroom, Pre-K-6*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
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- Miller, Carole and Juliana Saxton. 2004. *Into the Story: Language in Action Through Drama*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- O'Neill, Cecily, Lambert, Alan, Linnell, Rosemary, & Warr-Wood, Janet. 1987. *Drama Guidelines*. London: Heinemann.
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